

# CORONAVIRUS GUIDANCE

## Mitigation Measures

NC DHHS is making the following recommendations to reduce the spread of infection while we are still in an early stage in order to protect lives and avoid strain on our health care system. NC DHHS is making these recommendations for the next 30 days and will re-assess at that point.

The following recommendations pertain to persons statewide, effective Friday, March 13, 2020.

### SYMPTOMATIC PERSONS

**If you need medical care and have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or suspect you might have COVID-19, call ahead and tell your health care provider you have or may have COVID-19.** This will allow them to take steps to keep other people from getting exposed. Persons experiencing fever and cough should stay at home and not go out until their symptoms have completely resolved.

### HIGH RISKS PERSONS WITHOUT SYMPTOMS

NC DHHS recommends that people at high risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should stay at home to the extent possible to decrease the chance of infection.

People at **high risk** include people:

- Over 65 years of age, or
- with underlying health conditions including heart disease, lung disease, or diabetes, or
- with weakened immune systems.

### CONGREGATE LIVING FACILITIES

Facilities that serve as residential establishments for **high risk** persons described above should restrict visitors. Exceptions should include end of life care or other emergent situations determined by the facility to necessitate a visit. If visitation is allowed, the visitor should be screened and restricted if they have a respiratory illness or potential exposure to COVID-19.

Facilities are encouraged to implement social distancing measures and perform temperature and respiratory symptom screening of residents and staff. These establishments include settings such as nursing homes, independent and assisted living facilities, correction facilities, and facilities that care for medically vulnerable children.



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### SCHOOLS

We do not recommend pre-emptive school closure at this time but do recommend that schools and childcare centers cancel or reduce large events and gatherings (e.g., assemblies) and field trips, limit inter-school interactions, and consider distance or e-learning in some settings.

Students at **high risk** should implement individual plans for distance or e-learning. School dismissals may be necessary when staff or student absenteeism impacts the ability to remain open. Short-term closures may also be necessary to facilitate public health investigation and/or cleaning if a case is diagnosed in a student or staff member.

### WORKPLACE

We recommend that employers and employees use teleworking technologies to the greatest extent possible, stagger work schedules, and consider canceling non-essential travel. Workplaces should hold larger meetings virtually, to the extent possible. Additionally, employers should arrange the workspace to optimize distance between employees, ideally at least six feet apart. Employers should urge **high risk** employees to stay home and urge employees to stay home when they are sick and maximize flexibility in sick leave benefits.

### MASS GATHERINGS, COMMUNITY, AND SOCIAL EVENTS

We recommend that organizers of events that draw more than 100 people should cancel, postpone, modify these events or offer online streaming services. These events include large gatherings where people are in close contact (less than 6 feet), for example concerts, conferences, sporting events, faith-based events and other large gatherings.

### MASS TRANSIT

Mass transit operators should maximize opportunities for cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces. People should avoid using mass transit (e.g. buses, trains) while sick.